

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 4 and 7-12 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 3 and 7-10 are amended, claims 11 and 12 are added, and claims 2, 5 and 6 are canceled. In particular, claim 1 is amended to incorporate claim 2 therein and claim 2 is canceled. Claims 3 and 7-10 are amended to address antecedent basis issues and/or to correct dependency. New claim 11, based upon prior claims 1 and 5, and new claim 12, based upon prior claims 1 and 6, are added, with claims 5 and 6 being canceled. No new matter is added.

Applicants gratefully appreciate the indication that claims 2 and 5-10 contain allowable subject matter.

Claims 1, 3 and 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Publication No. 2002-0135560 ("Akaoka") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,371,623 ("Toyoda").

By this Amendment, independent claim 1 is amended to include the features of allowable claim 2, and claim 2 is canceled. In addition, new claims 11 and 12 include the features of independent claim 1 and the features of allowable claims 5 and 6, respectively. Thus, for at least these reasons, independent claims 1, 11 and 12, and dependent claims thereof, are patentable over the applied references.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 3, 4 and 7-12 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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